

GraceNotes



A Monthly Publication of the Congregational Activities of Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church in Newton, NC
email: gracenalcnorton@aol.com website: www.gracelutheran-newton.org Church Office: 704-462-1035
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HAPPY NEW YEAR!



FEAST OF THE EPIPHANY is observed on January 6th. It commemorates the manifestation of Christ to the gentiles in the persons of the Magi.



BAPTISM OF OUR LORD is the feast day commemorating the baptism of Jesus in the Jordan River by John the Baptist.

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS

FROM BISHOP DAN SELBO AND STAFF, NORTH AMERICAN LUTHERAN CHURCH

“As we celebrate the birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, may our temporal fears give way to the ever-present and eternal joy – and peace – found only in Him.

To us a living and life-giving Savior has been born!”

EASTERN CATAWBA COUNTY COOPERATIVE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY (ECCCM)

“We are very grateful to our church community for the support it has given us throughout the years, and we hope that will continue in the future.

Thank you for your ministry and all you do for the community. We hope that you will continue join us in our efforts to provide crisis assistance to people in Catawba County.”

FROM CATAWBA VALLEY HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

“Some gifts don’t fit under the Christmas tree. Your support enables families to celebrate a joyful holiday in the comfort of home that will forever be their own. Thank you for giving the greatest gift of all.

Wishing you and your family comfort and joy this Christmas!”

WORSHIP ASSISTANTS FOR JANUARY

- ❖ Lector * _____
- ❖ Ushers * _____
- ❖ Communion Assistants * _____
- ❖ Altar Preparation Herb and Libby Travis
- ❖ Offering Tabulators Todd Childers and Jason Yoder

*Names of Worship Assistants not available when newsletters were printed.

*Please be mindful of your commitment to serve. If you are unable to fulfill that commitment, be reminded that it is **your** responsibility to find someone to serve in your place.*



FLOWER CHART FOR JANUARY

1/7	Open	1/21	Open
1/14	Open	1/28	Open

If you wish to give the flowers for a given Sunday, please list your name on the chart in the narthex. *You are responsible for ordering the flowers from a florist of your choice; we do not have a standing order with any florist.* The liturgical color of the day is listed to assist you in selecting flowers appropriate for that Sunday. You should contact the Church Office so that the correct information is placed in the bulletin for that Sunday. Please notify the Church Office the Tuesday prior to your selected Sunday. You can call the Church Office between 8:00 AM and Noon on Monday - Thursday, leave a note on the desk, or send an email to let us know the occasion or memoriam for this wonderful gift of beatification of the worship.

ATTENDANCE AND GIVING TO OUR LORD'S WORK FOR NOVEMBER/DECEMBER

	11/26/23	12/03/23	12/10/23	12/17/23	12/24/23	12/24/23
Sunday School	10	5	10	9	7	N/A
Worship	44	36	33	34	35	47
General Fund Offerings	\$1,520.00	\$4,690.00	\$1,715.00	\$1,120.00	\$2,715.00	\$190.00

Needed Each Week = \$3,268.54

General Fund Offerings, November, 2023 = \$11,472.81
General Fund Expenses, November, 2023 = \$ 7,507.77
Difference = \$3,965.04 (offerings exceeded expenses)

THE GRACE PRAYER BREAKFAST will be held on **Saturday, January 13 at 9:00 AM** at Four Peas in a Pod Restaurant on Highway 70 in Conover. Great food and great fellowship! Please come and bring a friend!

THE UNHANGING OF THE GREENS will take place on Saturday, **January 13 at 11:00 a.m. after the Prayer Breakfast.** This includes taking down the tree and sanctuary decorations. We need your muscles and appreciate your help!

THE GRACE PRAYER LUNCHEON will be held on **Wednesday, January 17 at noon in the Fellowship Hall.** This is a time for any adults from Grace and the community to come together for food and fellowship! Please give Betty Wilfong a call at (828) 461-6604 and let her know if you plan to attend.

STEPHEN MINISTRY TRAINING will be held during the month of January on the following dates at 6:00 pm. If you have any questions, please contact Herb Travis, Stephen Ministry Leader.

January 2 – January 9 – January 16 – January 23 – January 30

THE NEXT MEETING OF THE LEADERSHIP MINISTRY BOARD is scheduled for **Monday, January 15th at 6:00 pm.**

NEW LEADERSHIP MINISTRY BOARD

At the Annual Congregational Meeting held on November 5th, the following were elected/re-elected to serve as our leaders: Alan Shull and Libby Travis. They will join the current members of the Board – Ricky Bivens, Sheila Drum, Jason Yoder, Todd Childers, Tim Eckard and Jeff Scronce. Installation of the Leadership Ministry Board will be on Sunday, January 7, 2024 during worship.

THE DISCIPLES OF GRACE DONATED 1,272 POUNDS OF FOOD TO EASTERN CATAWBA COUNTY COOPERATIVE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY IN 2023! Thanks be to God for your generosity in feeding the poor!

THE ECCCM FOOD ASK for the month of **January** is **canned soup or broth.** ECCCM thanks the disciples of Grace for helping to keep the food pantry stocked, and as always, all donations are welcome.

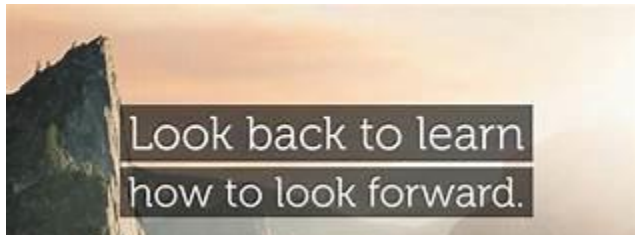
SAMARITAN'S PURSE OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD
LOOKING FORWARD IN 2024!

This year, tens of thousands of volunteers, **including the disciples of Grace Lutheran Church**, contributed to Operation Christmas Child, a project of Samaritan's Purse, by packing shoeboxes filled with fun toys, school supplies, and personal care items. The global Christmas project delivered these gift-filled shoeboxes to children in more than 100 countries, including many who are suffering from war, poverty, disease and disaster. Each shoebox is an opportunity to share the message of the Gospel and bring hope to children in need around the world. In 2023, Operation Christmas Child celebrated its 30th year of ministry! Also, the **200 millionth** Operation Christmas Child shoebox gift was given to an 8- year-old orphan girl in Ukraine!

The disciples at Grace are devoted to this yearly project; however, it has become more financially difficult due to inflation, the high cost of shipping, and the fact that Thanksgiving and Christmas are not even a month apart. It has been suggested that we begin sending reminders in the monthly newsletters throughout the year. Hopefully, this will remind us and give us more time to be able to budget and stretch our dollars. Additionally, we will make Christmas shoeboxes available to pick up earlier in 2024!

CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS
LOOKING FORWARD IN 2024!

Christmas poinsettias are such a wonderful way to adorn and beautify Grace Church at Christmas! We give thanks to all who glorify our Lord in this way! Again, with so many holiday expenses hitting us all at once, we will make order forms available earlier in 2024!



**REQUEST FROM ALLEN SHERRILL, VOLUNTEER ENGAGEMENT DIRECTOR,
EASTERN CATAWBA COUNTY COOPERATIVE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY (ECCCM)**

Allen Sherrill, Volunteer Engagement Director at ECCCM, is reaching out in the hopes that the Grace Congregation can be included in the new church volunteer rotation calendar for 2024. His position as Volunteer Engagement Director will allow for a greater focus on volunteers.

Recently, Hickory was added to the food and financial assistance area, so the need for volunteers is greater than ever. The pantry has been rearranged to accommodate this increase with the installation of new freezer and cooler units. Because of the expansion, there is a need to split up the available time slots for churches to either mornings or afternoons. (Example: morning of the first Tuesday of the month or the afternoon of the first Tuesday of the month.) This change will allow ECCCM to handle the growing volume of work and the increase in volunteers. It will also keep the pantry from being overcrowded and ensure that everyone has plenty to do. The goal is to make sure that the volunteers have the best experience possible.

ECCCM is very grateful to our church community for the support it has given us throughout the years, and we hope that will continue in the future. We would love to see our local churches select a day and time they would be willing to send volunteers to help with the ministry. If your congregation is interested or if you would like to find out more information about volunteering at ECCCM, feel free to call me at (828)446-5418 or e-mail me at a.sherrill@ecccm.org

ECCCM thanks you for your ministry and all you do for the community. We hope that you will join us in our efforts to provide crisis assistance to people in Catawba County.”

**THE ECCCM THRIFT STORE IS LOOKING FOR WARM COATS
FOR MEN, WOMEN, AND CHILDREN!**

When you give your gently used coats for ECCCM to sell in the Thrift Store, their clients can purchase them very affordably. Those clients who qualify for clothing vouchers will be able to receive a coat at no cost. These coats are instrumental in providing lasting comfort to those facing the bitter cold. As a reminder, all proceeds from the Thrift Store help those in crisis in Catawba County. You can donate your gently used coats at the ECCCM Thrifty Threads and Treasures Store located at 245 East N Street in Newton.

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**MINUTES
Of Leadership Ministry Board Regular Meeting
Monday, December 18, 2023**

Call to Order Called to order at 6:02 p.m. by Jason Yoder
Opening Prayer by Todd Childers

Roll Call Present: Jason Yoder, Sheila Drum, Todd Childers, Rick Bivens
Absent: Libby Travis, Tim Eckard, Gary Leatherman, Jeff Scronce

*Due to lack of a quorum, no business was conducted.

Minutes Minutes from the November meeting will be reviewed and approved at the next meeting in January.

Old Business

New Business

- A. The Unhanging of the Greens will be on Saturday, January 13th at 11:00 a.m. following the prayer breakfast at Four Peas in Conover at 9:00 a.m.

Ministry Team Reports

- A. Praise and Worship
 - 1. For Christmas Eve/Sunday Morning Worship, there will not be a Pastor. Herb Travis will bless the elements for communion.
 - 2. Pastor David Hefner will lead the Christmas Eve Candlelight Service.

Adjournment

There being no further business, a motion to adjourn was made and seconded. MOTION CARRIED.

Next Meeting Monday, January 15, 2024 at 6:00 p.m.

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